

with the majority.' The sentence was thus given. When the seven oxen heard this, they licked their lips and swallowed, pretending to chop up and eat my flesh. Indignantly, they raised their swords, saying severally, 'How can we forget our vengeance? We will have revenge some day.' The ten million men surrounded me and left the palace, carrying me on a palanquin and leading the way with upheld banners; they saw me off with praise, and knelt to salute me. All of them looked alike. I asked them, saying, 'Who are you?' They answered, 'We are the creatures you set free. Because we can never forget your kindness, we have merely come to repay you.'

After his return from the palace of King Yama, he made more and more vows. After that he never worshiped any deities, but had faith in the Three Treasures, turned his house into a temple by raising a banner<sup>12</sup> and enshrining a Buddha-image, and practiced the teaching and freeing of living beings. The temple was called the Nade-dō 那天堂.<sup>13</sup> Being spared from illness, the man finally died past the age of ninety.

One *Vinaya-kyō*<sup>14</sup> says as follows: "As Kāludāyī<sup>15</sup> was once a priest and sacrificed a sheep, he was killed, revenged by a Brahman wife, even after he had attained arhatship . . ."<sup>16</sup> The *Saishō-kyō*<sup>17</sup> gives the following passage to the same effect: "Rusui-chōza 流水長者 set free ten thousand fish, which were reborn in heaven and repaid his kindness by presenting him with forty thousand jewels."

## 6

### *On Copying the Hoke-kyō with Utmost Devotion and Witnessing an Extraordinary Event*

In the reign of Emperor Shōmu, there was a man who made a vow in Sagaraka district, Yamashiro province 山背國相樂郡.<sup>2</sup> His name is

12. 幢 *hatahoko*, a symbol of dharma, hence, a temple; see I.1, n. 7; Preface, n. 7, above.
13. It was named after the village Nade-kubo. Private temples were often named after the village; see Chap. I(1)d.
14. *Vinaya-kyō* 毘奈耶經, IX (*Taishō*, XXIV, 893); quoted in the *Shokyō yōshū*, XIV (*Taishō*, LIV, 129).
15. A disciple of Śākyamuni; a Brahman who performed a sacrificial rite.
16. 羅漢 *rakam*, a shortened form of 阿羅漢, transliterated from Skt. *arhat*, which means "one who is free from craving and rebirth."
17. *Konkōmyō saishō-kyō*, XVI (*Taishō*, XVI, 352b-353c).

1. Cf. *Sanbō ekotoba* (II, 10), *Hokke kenki* (III, 105), *Konjaku monogatari-shū* (XII, 26).
2. Present Sōraku-gun, Kyoto-fu 京都府相樂郡.

unknown. He copied the *Hoke-kyō* in order to repay the four kinds of blessing<sup>3</sup> and sent his messengers to the four quarters in search of sandalwood<sup>4</sup> to make a container for the scrolls of the scripture.<sup>5</sup> Eventually he bought it in the capital of Nara for one hundred *kan*<sup>6</sup> and asked a craftsman to measure and make a container. When he tried to put the scrolls in it, he found he could not do so because the chest was too short. He was terribly disappointed, for he did not see how he could acquire such materials again. Therefore he made a vow, held a service as directed in the scripture, invited monks to confess offenses for three weeks, and wailing, he pleaded, "Please let me find such wood again."

After two weeks he tried to put the scrolls in the chest and found that it had stretched a little of its own accord though it was still a little shorter than the scrolls. The man tried harder to discipline himself<sup>7</sup> and to repent, and, at the end of the third week, he could put the scrolls in the chest. Wondering whether the scrolls had become shorter or the chest larger, he compared them with the original and found they were the same length. Indeed, we know that this was a test of the vower's supreme faith and a sign of the miraculous power of the Mahayana scripture. There can be no doubt about it.

## 7

### *On a Wise Man Who Abused an Incarnated Sage out of Envy, Visited the Palace of King Yama, and Experienced Suffering in Hell*<sup>1</sup>

Saka Chikō<sup>2</sup> was a monk of Sukita-dera 鰯田寺<sup>3</sup> in Asukabe dis-

3. 四恩; see Chap. II(2)a, nn. 69, 70.
4. 白檀紫檀, literally, white sandalwood and purple sandalwood which is solid, lustrous, and fragrant. Brought to Japan by Buddhist monks, it was highly valued and used to make chests for scriptures, Buddhist images, altars, etc. It was rare and very expensive since it had to be imported.
5. 大乘 *daijō*; a Mahayana scripture, in this case the *Hoke-kyō*.
6. 貫; monetary unit consisting of 1,000 *mon* 文, coins.
7. 精進 *shōjin*, a translation of Skt. *vīrya*; the mind and deed to make the utmost effort to attain the path. In the popular understanding it means purifying oneself and abstaining from eating meat and drinking rice wine.
1. Cf. *Sanbō ekotoba* (II, 3), *Hokke kenki* (I, 2), *Fusō ryakki* (II, Shōmu), *Konjaku monogatari-shū* (XI, 2), *Nihon ōjō gokurakuki*, etc. See Chap. II(2)c.
2. For Saka (or Shaku) 鰯, see I.14, n. 2. Chikō (b. 709), an eminent monk of Gangō-ji and the Sanron School 三論宗 in Ch'i-tsang's tradition (see Chap. I(1)c, n. 66), is also known for his faith in the pure land. See Inoue Mitsusada, *Nihon Jōdo-kyō seiritsushi no kenkyū*, 48-58.
3. Unidentified.



district, Kawachi province 河内國安宿郡,<sup>4</sup> his native land. His secular name was Sukita no muraji,<sup>5</sup> later changed to Kami no suguri 上村主.<sup>6</sup> (His mother was of the Asukabe-no-miyatsuko 飛鳥部造<sup>7</sup> family.) He was innately intelligent, and no one excelled him in knowledge. He wrote commentaries on the *Urabon-kyō* 孟蘭盆經,<sup>8</sup> *Dai hamya-kyō* 大般若經,<sup>9</sup> *Shin hamya-gyō* 心般若經,<sup>10</sup> and other works and lectured on Buddhist teachings<sup>11</sup> to many students.

There was a monk whose name was Gyōgi.<sup>12</sup> His secular name had been Koshi no fuhito 越史,<sup>13</sup> and he came from Kubiki district, Echigo province 越後國頸城郡.<sup>14</sup> His mother was of the Hachita no kusushi 蜂田藥師<sup>15</sup> in Ōtori district, Izumi province 和泉國大鳥郡.<sup>16</sup> He renounced lay life, attained freedom from desire, and spread dharma to guide the deluded masses. He was innately intelligent, endowed with inborn wisdom. On the outside he had the form of a monk,<sup>17</sup> but within were hidden the deeds of a bodhisattva. Emperor Shōmu was so impressed with his virtue that he had great respect for and belief in Gyōgi. In reverence and praise his contemporaries called him Bodhisattva. In the eleventh month, in the winter of the first year of the monkey, the sixteenth year of the Tenpyō era, Gyōgi was appointed great chief executive.<sup>18</sup> At this, Dharma Master Chikō became envious and abused him, saying, "I am a wise man, and Gyōgi is a mere novice. Why does the emperor admire and use him without any regard for my wisdom?" Being dissatisfied with this situation,

he retired to Sukita-dera. Before long, he developed a stomach disease. After a month, when he was dying, he said to his disciples, "When I pass away, do not cremate my corpse, but let it remain for nine days.<sup>19</sup> If a student comes to see me, tell him I have some errands to do here and there, and offer him meals. Do not let others know of my death."

Faithful to their master's words, the disciples closed the door of their master's room so as not to let others discover what had happened and, grieving secretly, they stood guard at the door day and night, waiting only for the promised day. If a student came to see the master, they answered as they had been told, asked him to stay, and provided him with food and shelter.

As for the Venerable Chikō, two messengers came from King Yama to take him to his land. They headed west, and Chikō saw a golden pavilion in front of them. He asked them, "What palace is that?" In reply, they said, "You are a famous wise man in the land of Ashihara 葦原國,<sup>20</sup> how is it you do not know? You should know that that is the palace where Bodhisattva Gyōgi will be born."

On both sides of the gate there were two divine men<sup>21</sup> in armor with red headbands.<sup>22</sup> The messengers knelt and said to them, "Here he is." They asked, "Are you the Venerable Chikō in the land of Toyoashihara no mizuho 豐原瑞穗國?"<sup>23</sup> Chikō replied, "Yes, I am." Then they pointed north, saying, "Go along this way." So he went, accompanied by the messengers, and his body and face were scorched with a terrible heat though he saw neither fire nor sun. In spite of his suffering from the heat, he had a desire to move forward. When he asked, "Why is it so hot?" they answered, "The heat of hell is broiling you."

In front of them stood an extremely hot iron pillar. The messengers told him to embrace it. When Chikō did so, all his flesh broke out in sores until only his bones were left. After three days the messengers brushed the pillar with a worn broom, saying, "Let him live, let him live," and he regained the same body as before.

Again they started northward, and there was a copper pillar hotter than the former one. Although he knew it was extremely hot, again led by evil, he wanted to embrace it, and he was told to do so. When he did, his body broke out in sores. After three days, when the mes-

19. The text has 九日一日, but 一日 makes no sense in this context.

20. Or Toyoashihara no mizuho no kuni, a complimentary name for Japan, which means the "Land of the Plentiful Reed Plain and of the Fresh Rice-ears." Cf. Philippi, *Kojiki*, 137-138.

21. 神人 *shinjin*, those who look like kami, or who serve kami.

22. See I.1, n. 6.

23. *Ibid.*, n. 20.

4. Present Minami-kawachi-gun, Ōsaka-fu 大阪府南河内郡.

5. 鋤田連; see *Nihon shoki*, XXIX (Tenmu 10:4:12). Aston, "Nihongi," II, 351. The title of *muraji* was conferred on Sukita no Kurahito 次田倉人 in 681.

6. According to the *Shinsen shōjiroku*, the Kami-no-suguri family immigrated from Korea. Suguri 村主 is a title given to an immigrant family.

7. The *Shinsen shōjiroku* says that the family was descended from a king of Paekche.

8. *Urabon-kyō sho* (or *jitsugi*) 孟蘭盆經疏 (述義), no longer extant.

9. *Dai hamya-kyō sho* 大般若經疏 (recorded in the *Tōki denō mokuroku* 東域傳燈目錄, but extinct).

10. *Hamya shin-gyō jitsugi* 般若心經述義 (*Taishō*, LVII, No. 2202).

11. 佛教 *Bukkyō*.

12. Or Gyōki (668-749); see Chap. I(1)d, nn. 100, 101, 102, 103.

13. 高志; see *Shoku Nihongi* (Wadō 1:3:13; Yōrō 7:1:10; Tenpyō jingo 2:12:4, 4:30). This is a branch of the Fumi family 書(文)氏 who descended from Wani 王仁 (see I. Preface, n. 4). 越 is never found in other documents about Gyōgi.

14. Present Nishi-kubiki-gun, Nigata-ken 新潟縣西頸城郡. The *Shoku Nihongi* gives Kawachi as his native place. According to Inoue Kaoru, Kyōka made a mistake by writing his family name 越 instead of 高志, inferring that Gyōgi had come from Echigo 越後. (See his *Gyōki*, 12).

15. According to the *Shinsen shōjiroku*, his mother's family descended from immigrants from Paekche who may have specialized in medicine.

16. Present Senboku-gun, Ōsaka-fu 大阪府泉北郡 and Sakai-shi 堺市.

17. 聲聞 *shōmon*, a translation of Skt. *śrāvaka*, which means "one who is enlightened by hearing Buddha's teachings." See I. Preface, n. 16. This sentence is adapted from the *Myōhōrenge-kyō* (*Taishō*, IX, 28a): 內秘菩薩行 外現是聲聞. See Katō, *Myōhō-tenge-kyō*, 205.

18. 大僧正 *daisōjō*, the highest clerical rank (see Chap. I(1)d). This date is incorrect, for Gyōgi was made great chief executive in 745, not 744. See *Shoku Nihongi*, XVI (Tenpyō 17:1:21).



sengers said, "Let him live, let him live," and brushed the pillar as before; he regained his former body.

Then they went further to the north. There was such a hazy scorching heat that birds fell from the air. He asked "Where am I?" and the answer was, "This is the Hell of Abi 阿鼻地獄<sup>24</sup> where you will be broiled." On arrival he was caught and broiled. Only when he heard temple bells ringing did the heat cool and allow him a rest. After three days, when the messengers knocked at the gate of hell saying, "Let him live, let him live," he became alive again.

They led him to the gate of the golden pavilion, and said as before, "Here he is." The two men at the gate said to him, "The reason you were called here is that you abused Bodhisattva Gyōgi in the land of Ashihara. You were called here to atone for your sin. The Bodhisattva will be born in this palace after he finishes his life in that land. We are waiting for him, for his arrival is close at hand. Be sure not to eat anything at this place. Go back as quickly as possible." He returned eastward with the messengers and realized that nine days had passed since his death.

When he awoke, he called his disciples. Hearing their master calling, they came to see him, delighted to the point of tears. Chikō, however, was greatly grieved and told his disciples about hell. In great awe he looked for a chance to confess that he had been envious of the Most Venerable Gyōgi.

In the meantime Bodhisattva Gyōgi had bridges made, canals dug, and wharfs built in Naniwa. Hardly had Chikō recovered from exhaustion when he went to see Bodhisattva Gyōgi. At first sight the latter perceived by divine omniscience what the former had in his mind, and out of mercy Gyōgi said to him, "I wonder why we could not see each other before." Chikō confessed his sin, saying, "I was once so envious of you that I remarked, 'I am not only a great monk of a long virtuous life, but I am also endowed with natural wisdom while Gyōgi is a man of superficial knowledge and not ordained. Why does the emperor admire Gyōgi and ignore me?' Because of this sin of my mouth I was called to King Yama to embrace the iron and copper pillars. For nine days I stayed in his land to atone for my sin of abuse. I am confessing this to you, for I am afraid other sins will affect

my future life. I beseech you to help me become free from sins." The Most Venerable Gyōgi, looking compassionate, kept silent. Then Chikō said to him, "I saw a palace built of gold where you will be born." On hearing this, Gyōgi said, "What a delight! What an honor!"

Indeed we learn that the mouth is a gate to invite calamities which hurt us, and the tongue is a sharp axe to chop up the good. Thus the *Fushigikō bosatsu-kyō* 不思議光菩薩經<sup>25</sup> has a passage which refers to this: "Bodhisattva Nyūzai 饒財菩薩 is destined for ninety-one *kalpa*<sup>26</sup> to fall into the wombs of lewd women, to be deserted after birth, and to be eaten by foxes and wolves because he talked about the faults of Bodhisattva Kenten 賢天菩薩."

After that time the Venerable Chikō had faith in Bodhisattva Gyōgi, knowing that the latter was really a sage.<sup>27</sup> On the second day of the second month in the spring of the sixth year of the ox, the twenty-first year of the Tenpyō era, Bodhisattva Gyōgi realized that his life here was completed and left his clerical form on Mt. Ikoma 生馬山,<sup>28</sup> while his compassionate spirit moved on to the golden palace. The Most Venerable Chikō, on the other hand, proclaimed Buddhist teachings and guided the people from illusion to righteousness. In the reign of Emperor Shirakabe 白壁天皇,<sup>29</sup> this storehouse of wisdom left the land of Japan, and nobody knows where his extraordinary spirit has gone.

## 8

### *On the Immediate Reward of Salvaging the Lives of a Crab and a Frog and Setting Them Free*<sup>1</sup>

Okisome no omi Taime 置染臣鯛女 was the daughter of a nun named Hōni 法通,<sup>2</sup> the presiding officer<sup>3</sup> of the nunnery of Tomi 富尼寺<sup>4</sup> in the capital of Nara. She was so devoted in her pursuit of the path

25. Quoted in the *Bonmō-kyō koshakki* (Taishō, XL, 706b).

26. 劫 *kā*, a Hindu Buddhist cosmological unit of time.

27. 聖人 *shōnin*; see Chap II(2)c.

28. Gyōgi was cremated on the eastern side of Mt. Ikoma on the border of Yamato and Kawachi, according to his wishes.

29. Emperor Kōnin 光仁 (709-781).

1. One of the "grateful animal" tales, similar to II.12. Cf. *Sanbō ekotoba* (II, 13).

2. Unknown.

3. 上位: see Chap. I(1)d, n. 84.

4. Or 藤福尼院: it was located at present Nara-shi 奈良市. Although Ekisai identifies it with Ryūfuku-ji 隆福寺, Fukuyama maintains that they are different temples founded by Gyōgi. See Fukuyama, *Narachi jin*, 206-207.

24. Or 無間地獄. In the Buddhist cosmology hell is divided into eight divisions, that is, Hell of Repetition 等活地獄, Hell of the Black Rope 黑繩地獄, Hell of Assembly (All Living Beings) 衆合地獄, Hell of Lamentations 叫喚地獄, Hell of Great Lamentations 大叫喚地獄, Hell of Scorching Heat 焦熱地獄, Hell of Great Scorching Heat 大焦熱地獄, and Hell of No-interval 無間地獄. For a detailed description of this hell, see A. K. Reischauer, "Genshin's Ojo Yoshu," 40-46.